

AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please replace the following paragraphs as amended:

[0043] Fig. 9 illustrates removable electrode holders installed in jaws of an ablation head according to the invention. The ablation head 920 is analogous to the stapler head 420 of Fig. 4, but instead of an anvil, an electrode holder 940 (a first electrode holder) is installed in the upper jaw 430, while a corresponding electrode holder 950 (a second electrode holder) with electrode 955 (a second electrode) is installed in the lower jaw 460. One of the electrodes can serve as a cathode electrode, while the other can serve as an anode electrode. The electrodes are electrically coupled to the electrical supply lines 262, 272 in the clamping head 920 and to the electrical supply lines 260, 270 in the actuation mechanism 110, so that the user can selectively apply an energy to tissue that is clamped between the jaws 430 and 460, thereby ablating the tissue as desired for a surgical procedure. The electrode holder 940 may include flanges on both sides, e.g., flange 944, that rest on the lower edges of the upper jaw 430 to prevent the influx of tissue or fluids into the upper jaw 430. Similarly, the electrode holder 950 may include flanges on both sides, e.g., flange 954, that rest on the upper edges of the lower jaw 460 to prevent the influx of tissue or fluids into the lower jaw 460.

[0047] Fig. 11 illustrates the electrode holder 950 for the lower jaw 460 of the ablation head 920, including the electrode 955, flanges 954 and 956, and groove 952. A portion of the groove 951 on the opposing side of the electrode holder 950 is visible as well. The electrode 955 includes a connecting portion or electrical contact 958 (a fourth electrical contact) that is electrically coupled with an electrical supply path in the clamping head 920, such as the electrical path 262 of Fig. 2. For example, the connecting portion 958 may be electrically coupled with an electrical contact 1320 (Fig. 13) of the lower jaw when the electrode holder 950 is installed in the lower jaw 460. In one possible design, the connecting portion 958 is a protruding member as shown, and the electrical contact 1320 (a second electrical contact) is a socket that is electrically coupled to the electrical path 262 of Fig. 2 by wiring internal to the clamping head 920. The socket may comprise any appropriate design that provides a reliable electrical connection while allowing the connecting portion 958 to be subsequently removed. For example, the socket may include resilient arms that are pushed apart when the connecting portion 958 is inserted. The electrical

connection between the connecting portion 958 and the socket is electrically insulated from surrounding material, such as the jaw 460, which may be formed of metal.

[0048] Fig. 12 illustrates the electrode holder 940 for the upper jaw 430 of the ablation head 920, including an electrode 965 (a first electrode), flanges 944 and 946, and groove 942. The electrode 965 includes a connecting portion or electrical contact 968 (a third electrical contact) that is electrically coupled with an electrical supply path in the clamping head 920, such as the electrical path 272 of Fig. 2. For example, the connecting portion 968 may be electrically coupled with an electrical contact (a first electrical contact) analogous to the electrical contact 1320 (Fig. 13) of the lower jaw when the electrode holder 940 is installed in the upper jaw 430. The discussion above regarding the electrode holder 950 for the lower jaw 460 applies analogously to the electrode holder 940 for the upper jaw 430.

[0050] Fig. 14 illustrates a clamping head 1420 with electrode holder overlays 1440 and 1450 for its jaws 430 and 460, respectively. For example, the clamping head 1420 may be configured as a stapler with an anvil in the upper jaw 430 and a stapling mechanism in the lower jaw 460. The present invention reconfigures the clamping head 1420 to an ablation head quickly and easily without the need for uncoupling the proximal end portion 250 from the distal end portion 200. Here, the electrode overlay 1440 is provided over the upper jaw 430, and the electrode overlay 1450 is provided over the lower jaw 460. The electrode overlays 1440 and 1450 may be form-fitting plastic structures that are secured over the respective jaws, such as by using a snap fit. Corresponding mating structures such as groove and ridge may be used to secure the overlays on the jaws. For example, the overlays may be pushed lengthwise over the jaws. Or, the overlays may be pushed downward onto the lower jaw 460 and upward onto the upper jaw 430. Each overlay includes an electrode that is electrically coupled to an electrical supply line in the clamping head 1420 when the overlay is installed on the respective jaw. For example, the electrode overlay 1450 includes an electrode 1455 and electrical contact 1458 that is electrically coupled to an electrical contact [[1420]] 1620 in the portion 462. The electrical contact 1458 may include a protruding member that extends into a socket that forms the electrical contact [[1420]] 1620. The electrical contact [[1420]] 1620 may be electrically coupled with an electrical supply path in the clamping head 1420, such as the electrical path 262 of Fig. 2. An

analogous arrangement may be made for the upper electrode overlay 1440 to electrically couple its electrode to an electrical supply path in the clamping head 1420, such as the electrical path 272 of Fig. 2. Various other arrangements for electrically coupling the electrodes will be apparent to those skilled in the art. Fig. 15 illustrates the electrode holder overlay 145 for the lower jaw 460, including the electrode 1455 and electrical contact 1458, in further detail. The electrode overlays 1440 and 1450 may be used with a device that does not have a removable staple holder or anvil, or quick connect/disconnect clamping head in which case the overlays 1440, 1450 can be used to quickly convert a conventional stapler device (configured to accept such overlays) into an ablation device.